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A *df&xte* began with the triumph of the Republicans in the French elections of December, 1877, which removed the fear of a clerico-monarchical restoration. The recall of Gontaut-Biron, with whom the Chancellor had hardly been on speaking terms since the crisis of 1875, was hailed by him as an olive branch, though his departure brought tears to the eyes of the aged Emperor. The appointment of the Comte de St. Vallier, who had established excellent relations with Manteuffel during the occupation of French territory, confirmed the favourable impression of the Dufaure Ministry and of Waddington, the new Foreign Minister. On February 4, 1878, the Ambassador reported that the members of the Bundesrath saw in his appointment "a new era," and the Chancellor showed himself particularly amiable in their first interview. An invitation to take part in the Congress of Berlin was accepted, and Bismarck went so far as to offer the presidency to Waddington, in whom he expressed the same complete confidence that he had felt for Thiers. Even in Alsace-Lorraine there was a slight temporary *detente*.

When Waddington learned during the Congress of Berlin that Great Britain had secured the occupation of Cyprus from Turkey, he told Beaconsfield that he must withdraw; but Salisbury was ready with a *solatium*. "You cannot leave Carthage in the hands of barbarians. Do what you like there." The advice was supported by Bismarck, and on his return Waddington secured from Salisbury a written assurance of *desintmssement* in Tunis. No action was taken at the moment, but the conversations at Berlin opened a new chapter in Franco-German relations. In January, 1879, Bismarck invited St. Vallier, whom he described as "notre drapeau de paix et

d'entente," to Friedrichsruh, where he urged
the seizure of
Tunis, " I think that the pear is ripe and that it is
time for you
to gather it. I do not know if it tempts you,
but I must
repeat what I said last year to M. Waddington.
My desire is
to give you pledges of goodwill in matters which
concern you
and where German interests do not collide with
yours. It is
only fair, for I appreciate the efforts which he
and you have
made to restore confidence between our two
countries. Neither
the Emperor nor I want another war on our
hands. I believe
that the French people need some satisfaction for
their *amour-*
propre, and I sincerely desire to see them
obtain what they